

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652:

TAGS:

SUBJECT:
PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith IS FULL TEXT OF NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL OF
JUNE 15 HEADED "BEYOND THE KATANGA TANGLE."

2. PRESIDENT CARTER'S VIGOROUS CHARGES THAT CUBA BORE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAST MONTH'S INVASION OF ZAIRE WERE
UNWORTHY OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY TO BEGIN WITH. THEY TURNED
OUT TO BE UNPROVABLE EXCEPT BY A KIND OF GUILT-BY-ASSOCIA-
TION. THEY UNDOUBTEDLY INFLAMED AMERICAN PASSIONS FOR NO
DISCERNIBLE GOOD REASON. AND THEY THREATENED FOR A FEW
DAYS THIS WEEK TO EMBROIL THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY IN ANOTHER
TONKIN-LIKE TEST OF CREDIBILITY IN WHICH A PROUD AND
PROMISING NEW PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE TO TANGLE IN THE PITS
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WITH, OF ALL PEOPLE, FIDEL CASTRO. WHILE PRETENDING TO BE
ABOVE SUCH A SCRAP, MR. CARTER TOSSED A FEW MORE QUESTION-
ABLE PUNCHES YESTERDAY, BUT IF THAT WAS THE PRICE OF HIS
RESOLVE TO PUT THE MATTER BEHIND HIM AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE
INSTEAD, WE CAN ALL BE GRATEFUL.

3. SO JUST ONE MORE TIME AROUND THE BUSH:

4. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS EAGER FROM THE START TO ASSUME THAT THE KATANGAN INVADERS OF ZAIRE WERE HAVANA'S PUPPETS. YET KATANGANS, PROGRESSIVELY SUPPLIED BY BELGIANS, PORTUGUESE AND FINALLY ANGOLANS, HAVE BEEN TRYING FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES TO DISLODGE THE MOBUTU REGIME OR TO DISMEMBER ZAIRE. RECENTLY BASED AMONG FELLOW LUNDA TRIBESMEN IN ANGOLA, AND CARRYING WESTERN AS WELL AS SOVIET ARMS, THEY HAVE KEPT AT IT. THEY HAVE BEEN TOLERATED AND, INDEED, ENCOURAGED, BY THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT BECAUSE GENERAL MOBUTU HAS LONG BEEN GIVING AID AND ARMS TO ITS ENEMIES. MANY OF THE KATANGANS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY TRAINED BY CUBANS, WHOSE FORCES STAND GUARD OVER THE ANGOLAN REGIME. CUBANS MAY HAVE PREPARED THE KATANGANS FOR THE LATEST INVASION, AS MR. CARTER CONTENTS, AND ALSO DISCOURAGED THEM FROM IT, AS MR. CASTRO NOW INSISTS. SO WHAT?

5. WITH OR WITHOUT A CUBAN INVOLVEMENT, MR. CARTER SEEMED DETERMINED TO LEND A HAND IN RESCUING THE MOBUTU GOVERNMENT, AND GIVING ITS BANKRUPT TREASURY YET ANOTHER INFUSION. ZAIRE IS A MESS AND SEEMS DESTINED TO REMAIN A MESS FOR A LONG TIME WHILE WESTERN INTERESTS--AS FOREIGN TO AFRICA AS THE CUBANS--SEEK TO SALVAGE THEIR INVESTMENTS IN KATANGAN ORES AND MOBUTU BONDS. THIS MAY BE A DEFENSIBLE ENTERPRISE BUT IT IS NOT A NOBLE OR HOLY ONE. AND IT HAS PRECIOUS LITTLE TO DO WITH THE SEETING BLACK-WHITE

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CONTESTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA OR THE DISTURBING SOVIET-CUBAN INTRUSIONS IN THE HORN.

6. IF MR. CARTER THOUGHT AT FIRST THAT THE CUBANS WERE BEHIND THIS NEWEST TROUBLE, HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THEY WERE MERELY PICKING AT AN OLD SORE. BY PERSISTING IN HIS ANGRY CHARGES, HE WAS ONLY PLAYING UPON DANGEROUS EMOTIONS THAT EVEN STRONGER PRESIDENTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONTAIN. BY DEPENDING ON WHAT APPEARS TO BE ONLY CIRCUMSTANTIAL, AND PROBABLY DATED, EVIDENCE OF CUBAN COMPLICITY, HE WAS RISKING HIS PRESIDENCY'S HIGHEST AMBITION--A COMPACT OF TRUTH WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE--FOR WHAT COULD NEVER BE MORE THAN A PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE. WHY?

7. DEFINING THE CUBAN THORN AS AN ULCER HAS BEEN TRIED BEFORE AT THE WHITE HOUSE. IT WILL END AS DISASTROUSLY IN AFRICA AS IT HAS REPEATEDLY IN THE CARIBBEAN. FOR ALL THEIR PROTESTATIONS OF BROTHERHOOD WITH ANTI-COLONIAL AFRICANS, THE CUBANS' CAPACITY FOR INTERCONTINENTAL MISCHIEF DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON SOVIET DIPLOMACY, MONEY AND LOGISTICS. IF THE UNITED STATES HAS A DEEP QUARREL WITH

SOVIET CONDUCT AND PURPOSES IN AFRICA--AS WELL IT MAY--
THE PLACE TO BLUSTER AND TO NEGOTIATE IS IN MOSCOW,

ALTHOUGH ALWAYS WITH A SENSE OF PROPORTION ABOUT THE
STAKES IN ZAIRE OR EVEN RHODESIA AS AGAINST ARMS CONTROL
AND OTHER EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS. IF MR. CARTER NEEDS A
JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS OWN MODEST EXERTIONS AND INTERVEN-
TIONS IN AFRICA, LET THEM BE CALMLY AND FULLY PLACED
BEFORE CONGRESS. AND IF MR. CARTER NEEDS TO DEMONSTRATE
TOUGHNESS WITH ONE KIND OF COMMUNIST PRECISELY TO SALVAGE
SALT AND OTHER AGREEMENTS WITH OTHERS, LET HIM LEARN FROM
THIS EPISODE THAT RED DYE RUNS, UNCONTROLLABLY, IN THE
WASH.

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8. THE PRESIDENT SAID YESTERDAY THAT MR. CASTRO COULD HAVE
STOPPED THE KATANGAN INVASION EVEN IF HE DID NOT START IT.
WELL, MAYBE. BUT MR. CARTER BEGAN BY SAYING HE DID NOT
INTEND TO BE DRAWN INTO A SHOUTING MATCH WITH THE CUBAN
LEADER AND HE ENDED BY SAYING THAT HE WANTS TO TURN TO THE
FUTURE. THAT WILL TEST THE WISDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY OF
EVERYONE'S WORDS AND ACTIONS SOON ENOUGH. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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